

Does God Distinguish and Discriminate in His Dealings with Men?

By Wayne Camp

SCRIPTURE: Rom. 9:9-24

TEXT: Rom. 9:18; Ex. 11:7; Lu. 4:25-27

INTRO: The central theme of this passage is the discriminating, distinguishing of God in his dealings with men, and the declaration that he has every right as God to discriminate and distinguish among men.

- A. First there is the fact that God chose Jacob in sovereign elective grace and by-passed Esau is set forth. v-11-12
- B. Again, God distinguishes between Jacob and Esau by setting his love on Jacob while hating Esau. v-13
- C. Paul sets forth the fact that God discriminates in the bestowal of his mercy and compassion. Some he shows mercy while he hardens others. v-15-18
- D. Further, it is revealed in this passage that God makes some men to be vessels of honor, while he makes others to be vessels of dishonor. v-21

- E. It is also declared that God makes some men to be vessels of wrath fitted to destruction because he willed to manifest his power and wrath upon them while he made others to be vessels of mercy whom he had prepared for glory. v-22-23
- F. Finally, he alludes to the fact that some are called with an effectual call, while others are not called in an effectual manner. v-24
- G. Paul also reveals that it is natural, and also sinful, for men to rebel against the sovereign distinguishing and discriminating of God. Rom. 9:14, 19-20
- H. Moses, in his final message to Pharaoh declared this doctrine of the distinguishing and discriminating on the part of God. Ex. 11:7

Now, I realize that the subject before us is not agreeable to man's carnal mind. As J. R. Graves wrote, "All men are by nature Arminians; and the absolute sovereignty of God is a doctrine hateful to the natural and depraved heart. False Teachers have taken advantage of this natural feeling, and have for ages inflamed the prejudices of Christian men and women against any exercise of sovereignty on the part of God in this Covenant, either as to his 'determinate counsels,' his electing love, or his **distinguishing grace**" (Seven Dispensations, Pp. 95-96).

That God does discriminate and distinguish among men in bestowing his grace is abundantly evident in the scriptures.

I. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED IN LOVING SOME WHILE HATING OTHERS

- A. It is clear from the context that this is a sovereign prerogative that is not unique to Jacob and Esau. **Romans 9:11** (*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;*).

- B. The same distinguishing principle is inferred when Moses spoke of God's love for the nation of Israel.
 - 1. He put a difference between Israel and Egypt. **Exodus 11:7** *But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.*

 - 2. He set his love on Israel but did not other nations. **Deuteronomy 7:7-8** *The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

- C. From his prayer recorded by David it is obvious that many of those who were involved in the crucifixion of Christ were the

objects of his sovereign and eternal hatred. **Psalm 69:21-28**
***They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst
they gave me vinegar to drink.***

D. ***22 Let their table become a snare before them: and that
which should have been for their welfare, let it become a
trap. 23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not;
and make their loins continually to shake. 24
Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy
wrathful anger take hold of them. 25 Let their habitation
be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. 26 For they
persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to
the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. 27 Add
iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into
thy righteousness. 28 Let them be blotted out of the
book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.***

E. From another prayer found in the Psalms it is evident that
Judas Iscariot was an object of his sovereign eternal hatred.
***Psalm 109:7-19 When he shall be judged, let him be
condemned: and let his prayer become sin. 8 Let his days
be few; and let another take his office. 9 Let his children
be fatherless, and his wife a widow. 10 Let his children
be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their
bread also out of their desolate places. 11 Let the
extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers
spoil his labour. 12 Let there be none to extend mercy
unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless
children. 13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the
generation following let their name be blotted out. 14 Let
the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD;
and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. 15 Let***

them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth. 16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart. 17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. 18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. 19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

- F. From his mediatorial prayer in John 17 it is equally obvious that God had set his sovereign, everlasting love on those whom he gave to Christ. ***John 17:23-24 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.***

II. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY KNOWING SOME AND NOT KNOWING OTHERS

- A. He knew the nation of Israel but did not know the other families of the earth. ***Amos 3:2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.***

- B. He knows those whom he has chosen but not those whom he did not choose. **John 13:18** *I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.*
- C. Some he foreknew but others he has never known. **Romans 8:29** *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.* **Matthew 7:23** *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*
- D. He knows his sheep and then that are his but not others **John 10:14** *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.* **2 Timothy 2:19** *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* **Matthew 25:12** *But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.* **Luke 13:27** *But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.*

III. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY CHOOSING SOME AND BY PASSING OTHERS

- A. He did not choose all men to be the objects of his grace. **John 13:18** *I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.*

- B. He chose Jacob and bypassed Esau demonstrating his sovereign election. **Romans 9:11-12** *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*
- C. It is amazing whom he has chosen and whom he has bypassed. **1 Corinthians 1:26-29** *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.*
- D. Some he has ordained to eternal life while others he has ordained to condemnation. **Acts 13:48** *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Jude 4* *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- E. To those whom he has chosen he has given the faith of his elect while others have no faith. **Titus 1:1** *Paul, a servant of*

God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2 Thessalonians 3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

IV. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY MAKING SOME VESSELS OF MERCY PREPARED FOR GLORY WHILE MAKING OTHERS VESSELS OF WRATH FITTED TO DESTRUCTION

- A. Some he made to be vessels of honor and others vessels of dishonor. ***Romans 9:21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?***
- B. On some he willed to show his wrath and make known his power and are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. ***Romans 9:22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:***
- C. On others he determined to make known the riches of his glory and therefore made them vessels of mercy and prepared them for glory. ***Romans 9:23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,***
- D. To some he has given all things that pertain to life and godliness while others were made to be taken and destroyed. ***2 Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through***

the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 2 Peter 2:12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

V. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY GIVING SOME TO CHRIST WHILE NOT GIVING OTHERS TO HIM

- A. All those given to Christ come to him; many never come so could not have been among those given to him. ***John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***
- B. He refused to pray for some but did pray for those given to him so some must not have been given to him. ***John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.***
- C. He has secured eternal life for all those given to him; some will not come to him that they might have life and will never see life so must not have been given to him. ***John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.***
- D. Those given to Christ will never perish; some do perish so must not have been given to him. ***John 10:27-29 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I***

give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

VI. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY CALLING SOME AND NOT CALLING OTHERS

- A. All those who are called are also justified and glorified; some are never justified and glorified so must not be called. ***Romans 8:28-30*** ***And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.***
- B. All those called see Christ crucified as the power and wisdom of God; some see Christ crucified as a stumbling block and foolishness so must not be called. ***1 Corinthians 1:23-24*** ***But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.***
- C. God opens the heart of some so that they may give attendance to the word and be saved; he blinds the eyes of others and hardens their heart so that they cannot understand the gospel and be saved. ***Acts 16:1-4*** ***Then came he to Derbe and***

Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. John 12:37-40 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

- D. His people will be willing when he calls them; some are never willing so must not be his people and must not be called. ***Psalm 110:3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.***
- E. Those whom God has chosen he causes to approach unto him through the effectual call; some never come to him so must not be chosen and called. ***Psalm 65:4 Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that***

he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

- F. Those that are with Christ when he comes to the earth again are called and chosen; all men are not with him so must not be called and chosen. ***Revelation 17:4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:***
- G. All those who are Christ's sheep hear his voice and enter his fold; some do not hear his voice and enter the fold so must not be called by Christ. ***John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.***
- H. All those called are called unto eternal glory; some will never be eternally glorified so must not be called. ***1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 2 Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:***
- I. All those who are called are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ; some are never sanctified by the Father and are never preserved in Jesus Christ so all must not be called. ***Jude 1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and***

brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

- J. All things work together for good to them who are the called according to God's purpose; for many things do not work together for good, therefore they must not be of the called according to God's purpose. ***Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.***

- K. God, who cannot lie, has infallibly promised eternal life to all who are called; some never receive eternal life so must never be called. ***Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; Acts 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.***

VII. GOD DISTINGUISHED AND DISCRIMINATED BY SENDING CHRIST TO DIE FOR SOME BUT NOT FOR OTHERS

- A. He laid down his life for his sheep; some are not of his sheep so must not be of those for whom he laid down his life. ***John***

10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

- B. Christ will justify those whose sins he bore in his body on the tree; some are never justified so must not have had their sins born by Christ. **Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.**
- C. In his death Christ obtained eternal redemption for those for whom he died; some are never redeemed so must not have been the objects of his death. **Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.**
- D. Through his death Christ was to save his people from their sins; some die in their sins so must not be his people and must not be the objects of his death. **Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. John 8:21-24 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. 22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.**

- E. It was for the transgression of God's people that Christ was stricken but all are not delivered from the penalty of their transgressions therefore all were evidently not his people. ***Isaiah 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.***
- F. It was for his seed that his soul was made an offering for sin but all are not deliver by this offering so all were apparently not his seed. ***Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put [him] to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see [his] seed, he shall prolong [his] days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.***
- G. It is his seed for whom salvation has been made sure and certain but since all are not and will not be saved, all were not his seed.. ***Romans 4:16 Therefore [it is] of faith, that [it might be] by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.***
- H. Is was the many whom he would justify whose iniquity he bore, but since all are not justified, all were evidently not in the many mentioned in this verse. ***Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, [and] shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.***

- I. It is this same many for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, but since all are not delivered, apparently all were not ransomed for whom Christ ransomed must surely be set free. ***Matthew 20:28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.***
- J. It is this same many for whom he shed his blood, but since all are not redeemed by his blood, then some were apparently not included in the many for whom he shed it. ***Matthew 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.***
- K. It is this same many whose sins Christ bore when he was offered, but since many will die in their sins and still bear their sins, they must not be included in the many of this verse. ***Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.***
- L. It was his people whom God sent his Son to redeem, and he has redeemed his people, and whom he has redeemed he must have, therefore all must not be included in that number designated his people for many will not be redeemed. ***Luke 1:68 Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.***
- M. It is for his sheep that Christ laid down his life, but all are not his sheep therefore he did not lay down his life for all. ***John 10:14-16 I am the good shepherd, and know my [sheep], and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the***

sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd.

- N. It is his sheep to whom he gives eternal life, but not all are his sheep, and not all are given eternal life, therefore we can deduce that he did not give his life for all, just for his sheep. ***John 10:26-28 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand.***
- O. It is those given to him by the Father to whom he gives eternal life, but all do not receive eternal life so all must not have been given to him to give eternal life. ***John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.***
- P. It is those given to him for whom he serves as mediator and for whom he prays, but since he does not pray for all he is evidently not the mediator of all. Moreover, would Christ refuse to pray for someone for whom he would die? ***John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.***
- Q. It is those given to him by the Father who will come to him and of them he will not lose one, and since some are lost, such as Judas Iscariot, apparently all were not given to him to keep. ***John 6:37, 39 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of***

all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

- R. It is God's elect for whom Christ was delivered up to death, but since all are not his elect, he was apparently not delivered up to death for all. ***Romans 8:31-33 What shall we then say to these things? If God [be] for us, who [can be] against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? [It is] God that justifieth.***
- S. It is God's elect who have redemption through his precious blood, and since all are not redeemed all must not be in the number of his elect. ***Ephesians 1:4-7 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.***
- T. Christ did not take hold of fallen angels in his covenant engagements; neither did he lay hold of all the seed of Adam; rather, he laid hold of the seed of Abraham, a company of people composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Had he laid hold of the entire human race, all would be saved. ***Hebrews 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God, to make***

***reconciliation for the sins of the people. Romans 4:16
Therefore [it is] of faith, that [it might be] by grace; to
the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to
that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of
the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.***

- U. Christ has been made the surety for all of those given to him in the Covenant of Grace; and his honor is engaged to save them. ***Hebrews 7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.***
 - 1. If he does the Father's will he will save them without losing even one of them. ***John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.***
 - 2. The Father's honor is engaged to draw all those to Christ whom he gave to Christ. Jn. 6:37, 44, 65

VIII. ACTUAL CASES WHICH CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT GOD DOES DISTINGUISH AND DISCRIMINATE

- A. Of the eight sons of Jesse, God chose David to be the king of Israel and rejected the other seven.
- B. In the case of Jacob and Esau, it is apparent that God chose Jacob and rejected Esau.
- C. In the case of nations, it is apparent that God chose Israel and rejected all other nations from being his special nation.

CONCLUSION: How do you react or respond to this distinguishing and discriminating of God?

- A. You could charge God with unrighteousness, as Paul knew some would. **Romans 9:14** *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*

- B. You could blame God for your sinfulness and rejection of his Son as some do. **Romans 9:19** *Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*

- C. You could cry out against God and say that it is all his fault that you do as you do, but that would be a foolish and blasphemous charge. **Romans 9:20-21** *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

- D. You could fall down before him and acknowledge his sovereignty as a leper did and cry, **"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"** (Matt. 8:2).

- E. This leper knew that his cleansing, or his remaining a dying leper was in the hands of one who distinguishes and discriminates in the bestowal of his favors.

- F. Do not rebel against the sovereign right of God to distinguish and discriminate in his dealings with men. Every lost person

present can do as this leper and say, "Lord, I am a poor lost wicked dirty sinner. I have no claim on you, but if you will, you can make me clean."

--[From PHBC December 1, 1996]